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**Citation for published version:**

Saenz de Tejada Granados , C & van der Horst, D 2019, 'Tabula non-rasa: go-along interviews and memory mapping in a post-mining landscape designated for urban expansion.', *Landscape Research*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2019.1569220>

**Digital Object Identifier (DOI):**

[10.1080/01426397.2019.1569220](https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2019.1569220)

**Link:**

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

**Document Version:**

Peer reviewed version

**Published In:**

Landscape Research

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## ***Tabula non-rasa*: go-along interviews and memory mapping in a post-mining landscape designated for urban expansion.**

Peri-urban areas have long and diverse histories but when targeted for large scale housing expansion, they are at risk of becoming a blank slate for development, a potential loss to both existing inhabitants and potential newcomers. In this paper we develop a method to recover and narrate the sense of place of members of the pre-existing local community and map those memories onto specific locations and views within the landscape. Situated in a post-mining landscape on the edge of the city of Edinburgh, designated for urban expansion, our case study reveals the rich and diverse memories associated with seemingly ordinary landscape features; a stark contrast with the generic selling slogans and housing typologies presented by the developers. Deployment of methods like ours can help planners of urban redevelopment and expansion to better appreciate the sense of place of long-term residents and stimulate the process of place-making on new housing estates.

Keywords: walking interviews; mapping memories; peri-urban landscape; post-mining landscape; urban expansion

### **1. Introduction**

“We must learn to see the hidden forms in the vast sprawl of our cities” (Lynch, 1960, p. 12).

The global trend of urbanisation means that cities are expanding spatially and peri-urban areas are under a great pressure of development. Even in the European Union, where overall population growth is low or even negative, urban development is the fastest-growing category of land-use change (European Environment Agency, 2015). Indeed, European areas classified as peri-urban are growing four times faster than urban ones (Piorr, Ravetz, & Tosics, 2011). Rapid or large scale urban development brings with it a double risk of monotony; the pre-existing landscape may be ‘over-written’ as if it was a blank slate or *tabula rasa* (Palang, Spek, & Stenseke, 2011), and the look of

new houses and streets may become too uniform (the risk of ‘clone towns’ emerging; see Simms, Kiell, & Potts, 2005).

The traditional toolkit for urban design is constantly fed with new approaches from landscape architecture and geography, among other fields, in a context of growing awareness towards ordinary landscapes (Vanderheyden, van der Horst, van Rompaey, & Schmitz, 2014) and their capacity to impact in the quality of life of those who perceive them on a daily basis. Locals and newcomers may have different perceptions of proposed developments (e.g. van der Horst & Vermeylen, 2011), but developing and sharing a deeper understanding of the local history can help to overcome such divides. This would require efforts to uncover the hidden past and (re)interpret the visual clues still present in the landscape (e.g. Palang et al., 2006; Palang & Sooväli-Sepping, 2012), as well as coming up with (widely lacking) spatially explicit representations of non-material and intangible values linked to cultural heritage or place identity (Langemeyer et al., 2018).

There are multiple rationales for rediscovering, understanding and sharing the stories and history embedded in the local landscape. These could include avoiding the risk of a bland ‘could be anywhere’ development, helping newcomers to develop a sense of place and respecting the identity and the values of the ‘locals’. But there are also more integrated and aspirational reasons, such as the development of a future-focused narrative or a history-informed rationale to explain and inspire the development of less conventional buildings, streets and neighbourhoods. These place-based narratives have the potential to reduce conflicts between long-term residents and newcomers, and even attract specifically interested newcomers, thus creating a stronger sense of shared identity and a potentially more successful community in terms of social capital and sense of belonging.

This paper sets out to develop and try out a particular methodology for (re)discovering and (re)interpreting the local landscape designated for future urban expansion, in discussion with longer term local residents. We first discuss the challenges of placemaking in peri-urban contexts and explore previous studies and existing methods to undertake qualitative interviews within the local landscape. We then introduce the case study area. We discuss the perceptions provided to us by local inhabitants and capture these in graphical representation which enables us to undertake some comparative analysis. We synthesise our findings in the conclusions.

## **2. Placemaking in peri-urban contexts**

A growing valorisation of non-technical knowledge and community involvement in the definition of a common vision for the future of spaces (Allen, 2003) has led urban agendas worldwide to embrace placemaking principles, with ample experiences in public spaces of the urban realm (Silberberg et al., 2013). However, the distinctive characteristics of less explored peri-urban landscapes, such as physical and institutional fragmentation, low density, lack of human scale in its infrastructures and a highly heterogeneous and shifting social composition, makes the application of such principles in participatory processes especially challenging.

Rapid urbanization, as one of the main driving forces of landscape change (Antrop, 2005), seems to collide with the resistance that groups who “long ago designed their boundaries and defined their reactions in relation to a specific configuration of the physical environment” (Halbwachs, 1950) have to the forces tending to change them. In soon-to-be urbanized areas, where the countryside is thought, valued and planned mainly by urbanites and where future land developments are focused ultimately upon the urban needs (Antrop, 2004), designing *from* social and not *for* it (Tonkiss, 2013)

entails leaving behind the artificial (however deeply ingrained) distinction between ‘urban’ and ‘rural’, which has proven inadequate for dealing with planning and management processes in the peri-urban context (Allen, 2003), and making a purposeful effort to uncover and track less evident traces of pre-existing affective place-based connection.

### **3. Local perception: methods to link words and location**

Methodologies that capture the ways in which people and communities value places are becoming increasingly desirable to policymakers, planners and designers (Hein, Evans, & Jones, 2008). Since the definition of landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people’ (European Landscape Convention, 2000), considering ordinary (and not only outstanding) landscapes worthy of study and attention has raised the need for tools and archival material regarding the ways in which humans engage with the material landscape on an everyday basis (Bergeron, Paquette, & Poullaouec-Gonidec, 2014; Jones, Isakjee, Jam, Lorne, & Warren, 2017).

Mobile methodologies bring together the experiencing of a place with the narrative of the person while experiencing it. Tools to capture affective connections to places, ‘rescuing’ local’s understanding of an area before redevelopment, have been studied and applied in large scale urban development in Birmingham, UK<sup>i</sup>, where case studies combining walking interviews with GPS technologies has allowed for “the matching of qualitative ‘story data’ and spatial location” (Jones, Bruce, Evans, Gibbs, & Hein, 2008). In different forms and formats, mobile methodologies have also been proven useful in recent studies on commuting practices (Jones & Burwood, 2011) or the implications of place for health and well-being (Carpiano, 2009). Kusenbach (2003) explores the strengths and weaknesses of ‘walk alongs’ and ‘ride alongs’, among other ethnographic methods, highlighting the potential of ‘natural’ go-alongs to uncover

aspects of individual lived experience that frequently remain hidden during participant observations, sit-down interviews and more experimental types of go-alongs.

As Kusenbach (2003, p. 465) points out, “the strengths and advantages of participant observation, interviewing and go-alongs accumulate when they are pursued in combination, expanding the range of data-gathering techniques in order to exploit the different perspectives and angles each provides”. We set out to acquire a better understanding of the local perception of the peri-urban landscape of Newton Parish by means of ‘natural’ go-alongs, combined with participant observation and informal conversations with locals. Unlocking hidden traces in what is described by many as an ‘empty’ landscape is especially relevant in this area, where a distinctive but ageing community of ex-miners and their families has seen how the end of the ‘coal era’ in the Lothians is giving way to new developments for ‘suburban living’.

#### **4. Newton Parish**

Coal was mined in Midlothian since Medieval times, but since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the coal industry would experience a rapid decline; oil and nuclear power were taking over coal’s traditional markets, designated smokeless urban zones were cutting domestic use, and demand was falling. Many railway lines that transported the coal from the pits to the stations closed in the 60’s as part of the ‘Beeching Cuts’ (Bowman, 2015), and pits inevitably started to close.

In Newton Parish, Monktonhall colliery closed in 1997; the end of deep mining in the Lothians (Hutton, 1998). Today, the Civil Parish of Newton has a population of 3,258 residents (as of 2017) in an area of 856 Ha. Its main urban cores are Danderhall, Millerhill, Hilltown and Newton Village, along with various farms and cottages (Figure 2).

## **5. Exploring local perception**

Fieldwork by the first author took place between May and June 2017, resulting in eight go-alongs, nine short encounters and two informal conversations.

‘Go-alongs’ are those ‘walking conversations’ with locals, taking place in the public space and lasting at least 15 minutes. To conduct ‘natural’ go-alongs, people are approached in the street and asked succinctly about the area. If willing to do so, I would then follow by: “I can walk with you, if you don’t mind”. Conversation while walking starts, asking as few questions as possible to avoid inducing certain topics (which might be of more interest to the researcher than to the participant) or interfere in the story-telling.

Participants were generally reluctant to being taped and held back when seeing me take notes. Hence, I minimised note-taking during the go-alongs. Drawing a sketch of the route, writing down key words I can associate to the places where these are said, taking pictures where the comment is made and framing the element being pointed at were all fundamental tools for the subsequent transcription, aiding in the remembrance of details in their right order. Therefore, the ability of pictures to trigger certain memories is something I myself, as a researcher, rely on in order to guarantee as few barriers as possible during the conversation, and hopefully facilitate genuine comments and perceptions of participants to come through.

As shown in Figure 3, these conversations all took place within the boundaries of the Shawfair development already in motion and ended up concentrating mostly in the area between Shawfair train station, Danderhall and Newton Village. The limitations of the study are also patent in the distribution of the interviewees; by conducting ‘natural’ go-alongs, the researcher cannot plan ahead nor the itinerary, nor the time the interviewee will be willing to spend together. At first, a larger sample of older residents, who had lived in the area for over 50 years, rouse the will to target younger people and

newcomers. However, a certain saturation was reached when similar comments started to come up repeatedly (with little new information), and when I started to run into the same people over again.

‘Short encounters’ are conversations with locals, also within the boundaries of the area of study, but which either did not last long enough or were too static to be considered go-alongs. They provide, however, interesting insights and information to acquire a better understanding of how the area is perceived by the locals. These conversations are also transcribed and mapped out.

‘Informal conversations’ took place in the Public Library in Danderhall, with a duration of 20 and 75 minutes each. In both cases, the conversation was aided by the plans of the new Shawfair Development, held in the library itself and free to access. Useful insights were unlocked by the use of these plans during the conversations, facilitating comments and triggering memories or fears regarding the near future of the area.

Fieldwork also entailed a short conversation with the sales manager of a construction company selling built and soon-to-be built houses in the area, as well as conversations with ex-miners working at the Scottish Mining Museum in Newtongrange and numerous walks around the area, noting down personal impressions and taking photographs of the current state.

### ***5.1 Welcome to Shawfair. First impressions in participant observation***

Exactly 15 minutes (and 3 stops) from Waverley is the new-built Shawfair station; with its landscaped slopes, half empty parking lot and abundant security cameras, this ‘non place’ (Augé, 1995) is a node that has been planted, but is waiting for the chance to serve its purpose. As stated in the Proposed Development Plan, “Shawfair station is at



the centre of what will be a new community in Midlothian with the potential to deliver over 4,000 new homes and significant new employment land over the next 20 years” (SESplan, 2016, p. 19).

When first experiencing the area by foot, I notice the new incorporations are planned to be detected especially from the car; the newer road and roundabouts, the billboards publicising the new development... “Country living on the city’s doorstep” is what Shawfair offers potential newcomers:

Live closer. There’s a place you could be. A place that brings you closer. Closer to the home you’ve always dreamed of. Closer to the heart of a brand new living and working community. Closer to opportunity, and to new possibilities. Closer to a better way of life. It’s closer than you think. In the south-east of Edinburgh an ambitious project to bring new life to the region is taking shape. Welcome to Shawfair.<sup>ii</sup>

## ***5.2 Through the lens of local residents. Mapping memories***

Mapping out the go-alongs and drawing ‘cones of vision’ where comments of certain elements or perceptions of the landscape are made allows for graphically connecting what is said (or referred to) with where it is said.

‘Cones of vision’ are 60-degree angles from the point where the person is standing, drawn as far as the element that is being looked or pointed at is located on the map. This schematization of the field of vision is not intended to be an accurate measurement, but rather to act as a reference of both the orientation of the views, and the distance from the narrator to the element he or she is referring to.

Although few studies apply go-alongs in an explicit way, among which most are solely taped with recording devices (Kusenback, 2003; Carpiano, 2009), there is an “increasing interest in merging routes and discourse in a map that is able to conserve the space-stimulated recollections” (Jones & Evans, 2012). The mapping of walks or rides with participants, comment-tagging and photo-tagging throughout the route, has been done by means of GPS technology devices in recent works (Jones et al., 2008; Jones, Drury, & McBeath, 2011; Bergeron et al., 2014), generating interactive maps that combine narrative, geographic and visual data in an effort to create a ‘qualitative GIS’ (Brown, 2004; Brown & Raymond, 2007). However, and despite the usefulness of accessing layers of information of different nature without losing the physical context, these methods fall short to provide a clear mapping of the element that is being referred to in the discourse, the direction of the view, or the distance between the participant and the element being mentioned (the last of which can introduce an important issue of scale). The ‘cones of vision’ presented in this method, notwithstanding their limitations and abstraction, give information on all these factors.

The mapping of the go-alongs, undertaken after fieldwork, note-taking and transcription, implied georeferencing them on Google Earth Pro and incorporating the ‘cones of vision’ to the routes using AutoCAD software. Figure 6 shows them separately and at the same scale, and then overlapped. Three details are highlighted in each one: the years the local has been living in the area, the duration of the go-along and the total length of the walk. By overlapping them, we can extract information regarding the most common distances between the participants and the landscape elements mentioned:  $D(p-le)$ . Three ranges from an approximate centre of location of the walks are drawn: under 1km, between 1 and 2.5km, and between 2.5 and 5km. The few mentions of Edinburgh city centre are disregarded, for it was never pointed at, nor

played a main role in the story-telling of any go-along. Results show that over 80% of the comments were made about elements located at a close range, under 1km from the position of the participant, despite the terrain not being significantly rugged and the low density allowing for unobstructed far-range views from many spots.

### **5.3 ‘Hotspots’, or landscape triggers**

In addition to issues of scale and proximity, the overlapping of the go-along maps allows for the detection of areas from where most ‘cones of vision’ emanate; areas from where most references to the landscape were made. By corroborating this cartographic result with the transcriptions of the discourses, three spatial ‘hotspots’ (Figure 7) are identified for triggering most comments on the local landscape during the go-alongs:

- HS. 1: the roundabout entering Danderhall from Newton Church Road. This spot acts as a node for locals and provides unobstructed views of Church Road and Newton Village. The agglomeration of services (public library, medical centre, community centre and shops) makes it a transit point and place for daily routines and interactions to occur. This somewhat ‘busy’, however highly accessible area was chosen for the location of the miners’ memorial, creating a small square garden with several symbolic pieces that has become part of the everyday scenery for many locals, and a valued reference to the history of the community.
- HS. 2: the ‘main road’ to the SW side of Newton Village. Acting both as a main path and the western edge of Newton Village, it constitutes a main structural artery of the landscape. In its current state, the low gates of the aligned backyards, the bus stops along the sidewalk, a notice board announcing community meetings and events... all allow for social interaction among neighbours. The road has been enlarged in anticipation of the new development, with a two-lane roundabout that local pedestrians are finding hard to get used to.

In this sense, the predicted increase in traffic flow, if not accompanied by careful attention to the design of the pedestrian experience, the predicted increase in traffic flow puts this path at risk of becoming uncomfortable and losing its ‘human scale’.

- HS. 3: the new bridge over the Borders railway. Its topographic advantage provides clear views of former Monktonhall site, the new Millerhill Recycling and Energy Recovery Centre to the north, or the new Shawfair station to the south. Passing by this point triggered many comments on the landscape, raising issues such as past, present and future character of the area, loss of landmarks over time, or the fear of feeling ‘enclosed’ with the new development. The bridge does not seem to have been designed consciously as the lookout it has become, hence the sidewalks are quite narrow, and the two vehicle lanes take over most of the space.

Different factors give each ‘hotspot’ a singular character. However, they all encourage landscape awareness and share great potential as ‘areas of opportunity’ for the stimulation of placemaking processes in the face of the new development. While the three ‘hotspots’ are accessible sites with a certain topographical advantage and openness of views, the ‘busier’ character of the first two (HS.1, HS.2) triggered mostly references to (present or past) physical elements of the landscape, connections and daily practices, while the fairly isolated location of the bridge (HS.3) encouraged more reflective thoughts on intangible issues, perhaps also influenced by a slower pace while walking up the slope.

## **6. Landscape references and the role of time**

Conducting and mapping out go-along interviews with local residents revealed not only hopes and concerns regarding the urban expansion, but also rich and diverse memories

associated with seemingly ordinary landscape features, some of which are already gone, but are nevertheless present in the narrative and collective imagery of long-term residents. In this section, the most repeated and relevant elements are displayed and categorized in three groups: nodes and landmarks, paths and edges<sup>iii</sup>, and other less tangible issues.

### **6.1 Nodes and landmarks**

Participant in GA.1 (Figure 8), resident for over 45 years, when asked about the area starts with the mining history without hesitation. “There used to be the first pit. It was smaller, later on they opened the big one over there. You know? There’s a miner’s club. I’m a member, even though I wasn’t a miner myself.”

Approaching the elevated bridge (HS.3), there is a clear view of the former Monktonhall colliery site.

The bridge is new, they made it for the railway. See? It used to be here. It’s quite incredible to think there was once an open pit here, don’t you think? [*We walk in silence for a bit, until we get a clear view of Shawfair station*] So that’s the station. It really takes you nowhere near anything.

The first go-along conducted in the area revealed many landscape elements and dynamics I would later find to be key in the collective memory of the community. In the commingling of beliefs, practices and symbolic representations that is the construction of a ‘sense of place’ and a ‘sense of the past’ (Confino, 1997), nodes and landmarks (both present or disappeared) are common resources. Indeed, in this fragment, two out of three landmarks are (physically) no longer there.

The first ‘disappeared landmark’ mentioned by participant in GA.1 is the pit of Woolmet colliery, also referred to by locals as ‘the bing’. This element was mentioned in every go-along with long-term residents, proving to be deeply ingrained in their imagery of the local landscape. Some of these long-term residents are ex-miners of ‘the big one’, Monktonhall colliery, recalling its size and manpower with pride, and its modernist pit head as “the dominant piece of scenery”.

The sense of belonging to the community is strongly bound to the Danderhall Miners Club; so much so, that participant in GA.1 was proud to be a member even though he wasn’t a miner himself. Today, as a principal place for the older community of this area to interact, it seems to provide a sense of belonging not only to a community, but also a ‘sense of belonging to the landscape’ (Trudeau, 2006), shaped by the mining industry over centuries. Founded in 1981 in the site of former 17<sup>th</sup> century Woolmet House (Annex 1), it preserves the stone arch entrance even though the building is much more recent.

A subtle rejection or distancing from the plans for the new development becomes apparent in the reference to Shawfair station. As mentioned in section 5.1, the station feels alien and useless now, however it is planned to become a central node for the new-built neighbourhoods. Landscapes become spatially bounded scenes that visually communicate what belongs and what does not (Trudeau, 2006) and, for now, the station seems to serve and belong to the newcomers of tomorrow, while not so much to the locals of today.

The miners’ memorial in Danderhall has been recently built, however it is already be an important reference for locals. Participant in GA. 2 was proud to tell me about it:

Did you see they made a memorial over there? The one with the sculptures of the miners. They're lovely, they're truly lovely. [...] Did you see the cart? Well, that used to be on the bing. They left it there as a symbol, when it was closed down. But the kids wouldn't leave it alone, so they moved it here.

The church was also mentioned by many of the locals (despite being surrounded by taller trees and hardly visible from a distance), and participant observation revealed how older women visited its cemetery frequently. In the crossroad between Millerhill and Church Road, participant in GA. 7 (Figure 9) pointed towards a higher, wooded area:

There's the church. There's the cemetery too, my father and brother are buried there. And my husband. All miners. Back in those days, if you lived here, it was because your father, or grandfather, was a miner or a farmer. Newton Village was built for the miners.

This participant is a daughter, a sister, and a wife of the miner's community, and all these roles seem to justify her living in this landscape throughout her whole life. The cemetery, today, perhaps serves a multiplicity of memories from the various groups of which she is simultaneously a member (Halbwachs, 1950).

As well as several references to the old school, where some locals had attended, go-alongs revealed much concern for the location of the new school and certain distrust towards the participatory planning process.

There is great discussion over where the secondary school will be. They do some public consultation, meetings. I went to one, where the school location was discussed. But I have the feeling that the decision was already made, if you know what I mean.

The shop in Newton Village is another interesting element that came up in several go-alongs. The plot has been empty for at least two years, however this was the only shop that the residents from Newton Village, such as participant in GA.4, had.

So here is where the shop used to be. A Pakistani run the shop, his name was Ali. But it closed, 2 or 3 years ago. Yes, right here. He sold it, they said they were going to build something else, but there's nothing now.

The shops (or rather the lack of them) was mentioned by several participants. Especially those who recently moved to the area show optimism towards the emergence of new services with the urban development. Such is the case of participant in GA.8 (Figure 10), who had moved to Hilltown two months ago.

I don't feel it [*the new development*] will affect me that much. I live a bit farther away... I hear it may increase the value of my house though, so... that's a good way of looking at it. But no, I mean... I'm actually excited to see what they're going to do. I'm happy there might be more shops, less walking distance, more buses... My wife doesn't drive, so she has to take a lot of buses. And there aren't so many at the moment. The train is closer, but the train is more expensive, so she only takes it when she has to.

Followed by a brief silence, he looks at the earthworks and adds:

So, as I was saying... I don't think it's going to be so bad. It's hard to say for sure, maybe I'm wrong, we'll see. I don't know very much about the area, so maybe it's just that I'm not so attached.

## **6.2 Paths and edges**



The Borders Railway traversing the site has been a recent barrier for pedestrians in the area, however “bringing it closer” in terms of commuting time to and from Edinburgh. As with the station, long-term residents in the go-alongs expressed certain frustration with this ‘imposed fissure’ that has cut through former paths and forces the use of bridges to cross it. “This footbridge... I mean... it looks nice and everything, but it must have cost a lot of money, and nobody uses it!”

A common urban typology in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the ‘miners’ row’: a double row of single-storey terraced cottages built for the colliery workers and their families along a road, whenever a new pit was opened nearby. Examples of this in the area are Adam’s Row, Red Row, or Millerhill. The first two no longer exist, however Millerhill did survive the end of the ‘coal era’ and is where we can see most progress in the Shawfair Development, with houses already built, and many already sold. This path-like urban typology will be lost with the growth and addition of housing blocks, along with the scale of the village.

Concern for the potential loss of paths was another issue revealed during conversations with locals. ‘The path’ between Danderhall and the ‘main road’ is used daily and is as much a reference as Newton Church Road is. The importance of preserving the right of ways is especially pertinent not only to protect the public belonging of such historical uses of the land, but to encourage a pedestrian use of the area, for the scale and language of the newer roads and roundabouts **is** somewhat alien to the local community.

Another common concern is the disappearance of the dry stone walls that separate the farms, considered by many a characteristic element of their everyday landscape, however seemingly incompatible with the new design. As Millerhill resident for 37 years expressed:

The walls, the boundaries of the village, bit by bit they're being removed. It just doesn't feel the same, everybody's talking about it.

The minute they started removing the walls, we knew everything would change.

Participant in GA.7, after a brief moment of silence while walking along the stone wall, spontaneously shared a childhood memory related to this element:

We used to have a challenge with this wall when we were kids. We would race all the way from the Millerhill to here, over the stones. For us it was huge! The things you do when you're young.

From the experience of conducting these go-alongs, allowing for certain silences facilitates comments on the surrounding elements to come up. These do not seem to be part of a rehearsed story-telling of the area, but rather part of the experience of the place that arise only while experiencing it *in situ*.

### ***6.3 Loss and recovery, atmosphere and affordability***

The imminent transformation of this peri-urban landscape brings along a wide range of gains, losses, concerns and contradictions. The following issues brought up by locals show how material losses can be partially offset by efforts to preserve or recover certain elements and meanings, and how immaterial losses are somewhat offset by efforts to make the development more inclusive.

The role of time has proven to be an important variable in the appearance of certain landscape elements in locals' story-telling, as well as in the attachment they display towards them. The recent loss of Longthorn Farm, present in 19<sup>th</sup>-century cartography (Annex 1), was brought up by a resident from Millerhill:

I was very sad to see it go. I went inside the site while the workers were there, to ask about what they were going to do with all the beautiful ornate stonework. They told me it would be incorporated somehow in the new square, but I don't think they will.

Sensibility towards the past is shown in the naming of districts in the new development's masterplan. In conversations with locals, Cairnie (a district projected east of Shawfair station) did not seem familiar. However, in 18<sup>th</sup>-century cartography (Annex) a small settlement named Cairnie, appears. The fact that it is being 'recovered' in the new development will probably bring back a piece of the history of the area which, otherwise, would have been left untold.

'Atmosphere' can be described as a concept that seeks to explore the interplay of human activity, individual emotional perception and built forms, thus giving a more nuanced -though necessarily incomplete- understanding of changing landscapes (Jones et al., 2017). The coming shift in density and land use will inevitably alter the 'atmosphere' of Newton Parish; a concern expressed by locals in terms of increase in traffic flow, noise, loss of character or feeling of 'enclosure':

There's going to be much more noise! Before, the only noise was coming from the pit of Monktonhall, and occasionally the train. Did you see the shopping centre they built up there? Well, you can really see it in the landscape. And it lights up in the night! There used to be nothing like that before.

Participant in GA.4 said the following from H.S.3:

They're building houses here, and here, and here... I don't know... it will feel so enclosed! You won't see the sky anymore, it will all be roofs... We'll be surrounded!

The quietness, darkness, or openness of views that long-term residents value so much from their everyday landscape seem to be part of a 'countryside feel' that brought many of them here in the first place. It is also valued by younger generations 'coming back' to their childhood scenery; a recent dynamic that locals fear may be in jeopardy with the new development:

Some new generations are moving in again, maybe with a grandmother. My children will never move back again; I don't think they would have done it anyway, but after how the place is going to change... not a chance.

Another noteworthy aspect uncovered during the go-alongs was the distinction made by several locals between private and council housing in the new development, expressing scepticism towards secluded private housing and mild resentment towards potential 'elite' newcomers who may not be willing to 'mix' with the rest of the community. As mentioned by participant in GA. 6:

The place will change hugely, but change is necessary. There is a need for more housing, and I hear it's going to be mixed housing, as opposed to private areas separate from council areas. So that's a good thing.

Participant in GA. 7, to the question of whether the houses already built in Millerhill are part of Shawfair Development, responded:

Yes, but those are private. They're building what they call 'affordable houses' over there [*pointing towards Danderhall*]. For, you know, people who don't want to get, or can't get those huge mortgages.

## 7. Conclusions

Growth management trends often remain impervious to place-bound qualitative aspects of landscapes (Bergeron et al., 2014). More so in peri-urban areas, where there is generally a lack of physical references in the existing landscape to guide in the new, much denser layout, and where broadly-used placemaking principles for urban contexts may not accommodate peri-urban characteristics. Detecting the locals' attachment to certain elements of their everyday scenery in these type of landscapes gives the opportunity to implement policies and planning projects that are especially respectful of these features and prevent *tabula rasa* approaches.

Our study has demonstrated that natural go-alongs are an effective method to engage with current residents negotiating the transition from the post-mining era to the new development. It became a practical means to build rapport with the community (Carpiano, 2009), and a valuable complement to more traditional expert-based methods (Kusenbach, 2003; Bergeron et al., 2014) such as historical review and analysis, interviews, or participant observation. By devoting a modest number of days to field work (8 days, over the course of 4 weeks), this inexpensive method delivers meaningful results from the first stage, illustrating a great variety of perceptions with a limited number of participants. Despite certain challenges and limitations, natural go-alongs have proven to be methodologically interesting in terms of becoming an 'in depth'

interview method where the interviewer does not prompt the interviewee; instead, the landscape does.

The mapping of the go-alongs incorporates ‘cones of vision’, which deliver information regarding the element that the participant is referring to, the direction of the view, or the distance between the participant and the element being mentioned; a useful contribution to the existing toolkit for the mapping of affective place-based connections, currently consisting mainly on movement tracking, comment and photo-tagging, using GPS technology devices (Jones et al., 2008; Jones, Drury, & McBeath, 2011; Bergeron et al., 2014). These graphic representations allow for comparative analysis and detection of ‘hot spots’ with significant potential in terms of placemaking and landscape appreciation. Further analysis results in a compilation of the most repeated and relevant topics or elements, classified as nodes and landmarks, paths and edges, and other less tangible issues.

This work uncovers a tension between the wider planning efforts of the masterplan to anchor the urban expansion in an existing context, and the closer-scale materialization of the development, where selling slogans and anodyne housing typologies seem alien to the past (and still present) landscape and its roots to a mining community that has had to leave behind former ways of living. The interviewees demonstrated that the post-mining landscape was still rich in character and material points of memory, only some of which seemed to have been deliberately preserved. These residents were cognisant of the need for new housing and not resistant to change in principle; it is the challenge for planners and developers (and the methods deployed in this paper may help) to find ways to ensure that newcomers can be provided with a landscape much richer and more attractive than a *tabula rasa*, referencing regional history and local stories alike.

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#### Annex:

By tracking the most-repeated elements during the go-alongs in historical cartography, we produce a timeline that incorporates the plans for Shawfair development.

Source of historical cartography: Scottish National Library (Blaen map 1654, Adair map 1736, Roy Lowlands 1752-54, OS One Inch 1885-1900, Land Utilization Survey 1931-35, OS 1:25,000 1937-61, OS 1:1,250 1944-66, OS One Inch 7<sup>th</sup> series 1955-61, OS 1993-95, and OpenTopoMap 2017). Shawfair Development Plans retrieved from: <http://www.shawfair.co.uk>.)

For this analysis, only tangible elements mentioned by participants were included.

Figure captions:

Figure 1. Location of the area of study. Right: coalfields in Northern England and Scotland (Based on 'Sheet 1: coal and iron map', 1945. Source: National Library of Scotland)

Figure 2. Area of study (Development Plans consulted in Danderhall Public Library, June 2017)

Figure 3. Mapping of the conversations carried out on the field

Figure 4. Shawfair Station (photograph taken by first author during GA.1, May 2017)

Figure 5. Billboard announcing the Shawfair Development at a road intersection (photograph taken by first author during GA.4, May 2017)

Figure 6. Mapping of the go-alongs

Figure 7. Overlapping of go-alongs and detection of 'hot spots'

Figure 8: Mapping of GA.1

Figure 9. Mapping of GA.7

Figure 10. Mapping of GA.8

Figure 11. Nodes and landmarks

Figure 12. Paths and edges

A1. Tracking the permanence of landscape elements in historical cartography

A2. Map of present and future elements in the landscape

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<sup>i</sup> For further information on 'Rescue Geography' project and research outputs, see

<http://www.rescuegeography.org.uk/>.

<sup>ii</sup> Text from Shawfair website <http://www.shawfair.co.uk/> (last consulted, 19 October 2017)

<sup>iii</sup> Main urban elements shaping the image of the city, according to Lynch (1960): path, edge, landmark, node, district/region.